

CHANGING PHILOSOPHIES OF TEACHER EDUCATION AND THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

The big issue for teacher education is the contribution of higher education in making the teachers as professional. This paper aims to examine the different philosophies of teacher education that have emerged over the last forty years and what it has implied towards the contribution of higher education. This paper also discusses the policy frameworks in which these philosophies take shape. The study indicates that teacher as a rational autonomous agent is the main idea that seals the teacher education curriculum. Nevertheless, a teacher as a researcher contending against the standard driver professional development has existed and can be found everywhere as a champion of a continuing role for higher education.

Keywords: Philosophies, policy frameworks, teacher education, higher education, contribution

Abstrak

Isu besar dalam pendidikan guru adalah sumbangan pendidikan tinggi dalam melahirkan guru-guru profesional. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji perbezaan falsafah pendidikan guru yang telah wujud lebih daripada 40 tahun dan kesannya dalam sumbangan pendidikan tinggi. Kajian ini juga membincangkan kerangka dasar yang telah membentuk falsafah tersebut. Kajian ini menunjukkan guru sebagai ejen *rational autonomous* adalah persoalan utama yang termaktub dalam kurikulum pendidikan gur. Walau bagaimanapun, guru sebagai pengkaji yang bersaing dengan standard piawaian pembangunan profesional (*standard driver professional development*) yang sedia wujud dan boleh ditemui di mana sahaja sebagai model berterusan untuk pendidikan tinggi.

Kata Kunci: Falsafah, reka bentuk polisi, pendidikan guru, pendidikan tinggi, sumbangan

THE BIG ISSUE FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

The big issue in the United Kingdom (UK), especially England and Wales, is whether higher education has any *distinctive contribution* to make to the professional development of teachers? At the level of pre-service the HEI's provide a *delivery and management system* for the curriculum as opposed to playing a major generative role in creating it. We now talk about *training* teachers rather than *educating* them as the core business of education departments in HEI's. Burdensome cycles of inspection by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) have shown the HEI's to be generally *effective as delivery and management systems*, and there is no longer so much talk of developing teacher education entirely to consortia of schools (SCITTS). Many of the letter did not emerge too well from the inspection process. Nevertheless HEI's are facing increasing competition from other alternative providers of training, such as private sector companies and N.G.O's. Their present role as managers of the cost-effective provision of competency-based training for teachers says nothing about whether HEI's have a distinctive contribution to make by virtue of their role in society as centres for the generation and transmission of public knowledge. The letter, in spite of much protest, through the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET), has been unable to mount any form of effective resistance.

Collectively Vice Chancellors and Principals have also not proved an effective voice in articulating a distinctive contribution for Higher Education. Education departments in universities have not, with some exceptions, enjoyed high status. Their staff have not always felt entirely at home in institutions structured for the purpose of transmitting and producing systems of knowledge grounded in specific academic disciplines. The irony lies in the fact that the expansion of teacher education in universities during the 1960's and 70's was motivated by the desire to enhance the quality and professional status of teachers operating in an increasingly comprehensive and non-selective education system. The cost was to replace the old 'craft culture' of the teacher training college with a 'discipline of education' culture; programmes of pre-service and in-service professional studies grounded in the disciplines of psychology, philosophy, sociology, and history. This was to be 'the new professionalism'. However, many university teachers did not see 'teaching and learning' processes as a focus for scholarly study. At best it was a matter of 'craft knowledge'. They did not help teacher education settle down in many cases to its new home. Old attitudes still linger on. Vice-Chancellors are, in general, unlikely candidates for martyrdom if fighting the corner for teacher education in their universities.

In this paper I will examine the different philosophies of teacher education that have emerged over the last forty years and what they imply if anything about the contribution of higher education. I will also look at the policy frameworks in which these philosophies take shape.

THE TEACHER AS A RATIONAL AUTONOMOUS AGENT

Once upon a time as indicated above, around forty years ago, the *'teacher as a rational autonomous agent'* was the big idea that sealed a somewhat rocky marriage between the universities and the teacher training colleges. Certain academic disciplines such as psychology, sociology, philosophy and history came to be viewed as sources of theoretical knowledge that provided a rational foundation for educational practice, grounded in objective knowledge and thereby eliminating social bias and prejudice from the profession. By the early 70's this kind of rationalism was attacked from within the citadel of teacher education itself for there was little evidence of teachers being able to translate theory into practice. From the policy-makers perspective a teacher education curriculum grounded in the human sciences was seen as the source of child-centred theories that impeded the project of engineering education as an instrument of economic growth. From the perspective of a 'hidden majority' of teachers, however, the theories didn't work in practice. So the government attack on theory-based professional development programmes in universities and colleges has met with relatively little resistance from the teaching profession.

Disciplines-based teacher education has also been rendered vulnerable by factors operating inside the academy itself. The idea of objective knowledge across a whole range of disciplines, particularly the humanities and human sciences, has come under attack from within and thereby undermined the very idea of a rational foundation for professional practice.

Put all the influences cited above together and it is not surprising that university-based teacher educators have been unable to sustain a curriculum grounded in the academic disciplines. It has now become the 'old professionalism'. This leaves them with the issue of continuing to justify their higher education base.

The former Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals in the UK published discussion paper by Professor John Furlong (2000), which attempts to ground such a justification in a new 'new professionalism'. The paper suggests that what we have now in the UK is not a curriculum for developing teachers as professionals but for training them as technicians. While Higher Education Institutions cannot any longer provide a base for 'the old professionalism', social and economic change is impacting on schools in ways that are laying the conditions for the emergence of a 'new professionalism' to counter-act the tendency to turn teachers into technicians. Furlong argues that not even the government will be able to prevent such a transformation. The case for a continuing HE role in teacher education must therefore be articulated in terms of the distinctive contribution it can make to the growth of this 'new professionalism'. What this consists of is made entirely clear although it clearly embraces the ideas of the 'teacher as a reflective practitioner' and of the 'teacher as a researcher'.

THE TEACHER AS RESEARCHER

Following on from the rationalist vision of the ‘teacher as an autonomous rational agent’ the next big idea in the UK was introduced by Lawrence Stenhouse in the context of the school-based curriculum development movement, where academics and teachers collaborated on projects to promote curriculum and pedagogical change in classrooms. It was that of the ‘*teachers as researcher*’.

This idea redefined the concept of professional autonomy. Although the individual teacher remained the locus of control over how educational practice shaped up in his or her classroom this control for Stenhouse could not be rationalized by a straightforward appeal to knowledge derived from the application of the academic disciplines to education. Contrary to the positivistic vision Stenhouse did not view such knowledge positivistically as leaving little room for doubt and speculation but rather regarded it as dynamic, provisional, and open to question rather than an object of mastery (see Stenhouse, 1975: 85-86). This is why he was highly critical of objective model of curriculum design, whether it was a curriculum for school students or for student teachers. Such a model distorted the nature of knowledge. For Stenhouse the academic disciplines provided teachers at best with resources, in the form of concepts, procedures and criteria, for reflecting about experience and the complexities of practice in classrooms. These resources left space for them to exercise their individuality, creativity and imagination in their teaching.

Stenhouse’s perspective was well illustrated by a suggestion he made to teachers on how to respond to academics who proposed that they base their practice on some theoretical framework or other. “Tell them to go away and translate the theory into a curriculum proposal that you can test in action within the laboratory of the classroom”. In the Humanities Curriculum Project he personally demonstrated this injunction by drawing on the idea of the philosopher of education R.S.Peters to design a curriculum that enabled teachers to examine in the light of evidence from their classrooms the meaning and potential of an innovatory pedagogy for handling controversial issues in classrooms. Hence, the idea of the ‘teacher as a researcher’.

A curriculum Stenhouse argued needed to satisfy five criteria. First, it should pose philosophical issues about the nature of knowledge and how it is to be pedagogically represented in concrete procedures for teaching and learning. He called such issues *problems of meaning* for teachers to address in the context of their practice. Hence, the Humanities Project challenged teachers to examine the relationship of knowledge to their authority position in the classroom when dealing with controversial issues. Stenhouse argued that discussions of the philosophical issues of *meaning* in teaching should be grounded in the empirical study of the curriculum in specific contexts of action. It is only if the adoption of the curriculum as a framework for action exposes the practical significance of these issues that they become worthwhile for teachers to discuss.

Secondly, a curriculum should be capable of fostering an inquiry into the *potential* of a pedagogical practice or procedure in opening up new educational possibilities in classroom situations e.g. in the context of handling controversial issues, the potential of a procedurally neutral stance by the teacher to promote independent thinking by students. Thirdly, a curriculum should enable teachers to explore problems, which are of broad interest to educators because they tend to persist within the system and recur from situation to situation e.g. the problem of assessing learning through discussion rather than instruction.

Fourthly, the design of the curriculum framework should be sensitive to the 'conditionality' of practice i.e. to the particular contextual conditions that shape practice in classrooms and schools. It should leave space for teachers to exercise creativity and imagination in determining through their research the contribution of the key ideas, procedural principles and criteria that constitute the framework to the development of concrete forms of action within their specific teaching contexts. In this sense the Stenhouse curriculum provides a framework for an aesthetic ordering rather than a rational ordering of pedagogical practice. The latter involves the instantiation of ideas, principles and criteria according to a set of antecedent rules that prescribe a concrete form of action. The former involves the determination in a particular context of a novel form of action based on a creative interpretation of the meaning and significance of the elements of the framework for the context.

As a basis for supporting a novel ordering of pedagogical practice through teacher's research in their classrooms Stenhouse's *process model* of curriculum design might be considered to be Confucian in its orientation towards *aesthetic* order as opposed to the *rational* order embraced by the dominant western models of curriculum planning (see Hall and Ames 1987: 16-17). This perhaps explains the growing interest in Stenhouse's curriculum theory and his idea of the 'teachers as a researcher' in East Asian countries such as Hong Kong and Taiwan as they strive to reform the curriculum by constructing framework that respect the generative capacities of teachers in schools (see, for examples, *Learning to Learn*, June 2001). It is ironic that these and other Asian countries are moving towards developing open frameworks for school-based curriculum development when some western countries like the UK have moved towards a much more prescriptive curriculum model in response to the economic threat the former countries posed within the global economy.

Before linking Stenhouse's idea of the 'teacher as researcher' too closely with the Confucian tradition it is worth pointing out that the teacher is assumed by Stenhouse to be the individual agent of excellence. S(he) exists as an independent author of the classroom situation s(he) creates. As such the idea might be considered to be more existentialist than Confucian. From a Confucian perspective the realization of excellence is the achievement of independent selves exercising mutual deference in their relations to each other.

Hence, excellence in teaching might be an achievement of teachers researching their practice in partnership with their peers, the pupils and their parents. The Confucian perspective would require some adjustment of the idea of the 'teacher as researcher' to accommodate a more relational and contextualised image of the teacher, since the letter does not simply determine a situation but is in turn determined by it. Interestingly, one can discern such an adjustment in the idea of the 'Lesson Study' in which teachers collaborate to observe, analyze and improve their lessons together.

Finally, I should briefly mention that Stenhouse argued that a curriculum should be designed to throw light on the problems of bringing about significant educational change.

It is clear from the above criteria that Stenhouse saw curriculum development as a form of research that linked the 'meaning', 'potential' and 'interest' of the curriculum "to the contextual conditions of classrooms and schools". It is not a conventional form of educational research but is constituted by a collaborative curriculum development process that engages educational theorists and teachers in "the close study of schools and classrooms". The idea of 'teachers as researchers' was located in this over-all vision of curriculum development as a form of applied research called action research.

The image of the teacher as a 'rational autonomous professional' would imply a teacher education curriculum based on, in addition to teaching subject studies, the so-called foundation disciplines of education plus opportunities for applying knowledge through school experience. The image of the 'teacher as a researcher' would place Curriculum Studies in addition to subject studies at the core of the teacher education curriculum. This would include learning to design a curriculum to support educational experiments in classrooms, participating in such experiments in schools by undertaking action research, and studying through the use of case study materials curriculum development in action in a range and variety of school settings.

Stenhouse's idea of the 'teacher as researcher' implies that teachers do not simply accept responsibility for their actions but also responsibility for choosing their reasons for doing things, since the ultimate source of such reasons lies not in transcendent bodies of indubitable knowledge but in their situational judgement and agency in particular action contexts. The idea of the 'teacher as researcher' does not refer to the teacher making a contribution to the production of foundational knowledge. Rather it subverts a view of knowledge as a firm foundation for subsequent action. The teacher who treats his/her professional knowledge as if it existed in a transcendent realm of theory would on a Stenhouse vision of the 'teacher as a researcher' count as a form of Sartrean 'bad faith', for from this point of view knowledge is imminent in action.

If the idea of the ‘teacher as a rational autonomous agent’ stems from the Platonic vision of a human mind shaped by abstract universals that of the ‘teacher as researcher’ might appear to stem from an existentialist vision of the individual taking sole responsibility for transforming his/her practice through personal acts of reconstruction and valuation. Stenhouse’s idea anticipated the growth of a post-modern critique of knowledge as the foundation of a rational society throughout the academic disciplines. One might argue that he might have saved a rocky marriage between the university and teacher education by reconstituting the relationship between teachers and academics in the construction of professional knowledge as more collaborative.

However, Stenhouse’s vision of the curriculum as a medium of teacher development through research was not sustained with the implementation in 1989 of a highly prescriptive national curriculum for England and Wales that sought to impose some rational order on students learning experiences in schools. It never had a great deal of impact on initial teacher education and was much more influential in shaping the development of Curriculum Studies as a field of educational inquiry for serving teachers on Masters-level postgraduate courses until school-based curriculum development became a thing of the past in the late 80’s.

The emphasis in teacher education shifted during the 90’s to the production of behaviours or competences that complied with the requirements of the national curriculum.

Universities in the UK found themselves on the receiving end of lists of things teachers need to be able to do if they are to competently deliver the curriculum.

STANDARDS-DRIVEN TEACHER TRAINING: A RATIONALE FOR REPOSITIONING THE TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM OUTSIDE HIGHER EDUCATION

From 1992-95 th UK government issued list of competences for both secondary and primary initial teacher education programmes in England and Wales and made it quite clear that they should constitute the main framework for assessing student teacher. In order to secure this the government prescribed that student teacher spent a great deal more time being trained in schools by teacher mentors and less in the higher education institution. It also established a new quasi-government agency (the Teacher Training Agency) to manage teacher supply and the resourcing of teacher education programmes, and stepped up inspections by ‘Her Majesties Inspectorate’ under the umbrella of the recently formed Office for Standards in education (OfSTED) to inform the TTA’s allocation of resources. Previously, initial and continuing teacher education in Higher Education had been funded through the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE).

This change in responsibility for funding and the effective establishment of a state controlled inspection system, effectively removed control of the teacher education curriculum from higher education even when it retained a large measure of responsibility for its 'delivery', including the school-based component. The Vice-Chancellors of UK Universities were unable to mount any effective opposition to this development.

This divorce between power and responsibility for teacher education came at a time when the link was under attack from neo-liberal politicians and intellectuals. The idea of 'competency-based' or, to use a contemporary rephrasing, 'standard-driven teacher training' proved attractive in this context, since it promised to minimize the contribution of HEI's to the development of professional knowledge for reasons outlined below. At the time the ideological agenda was generally seen to be positioned in the Conservative Government. Subsequently it became clear that the agenda reflected a new political consensus that embraced all the major political parties, including the 'New Labour' government from 1997 to the present day. What characterizes this ideological agenda with respect to education? I would suggest the following:

1. The supremacy of the economic goals of society over all the other social goals, expressed in an over-riding concern for the economic positioning of the UK in the global market. Constant comparisons with education performance in 'pacific rim' countries like Japan and Taiwan were indicative that global economic competitiveness was now driving educational reform generally in the UK, including reform in teacher education.
2. Reconstructing education as a sub-system of the economic system rather than a component of a public welfare system that had been uncoupled from the private economic sector, as was typical in the social-democratic state.
3. Restricting education in the form of the social market in which the key concept is parental choice. Schools compete for pupils. Competition drives up standards, whose guarantor is a National Curriculum organized around subject-based attainment target and levels. Successful schools are those which increase the amount of economically functional 'cultural capital' they produce for pupils, as this is defined by National Curriculum attainment levels, particularly in Maths, English, and Science, at each of four key stages in basic education (yrs 5-7, 8-11, 12-14, 14-16). National performance tables provide parents with the information they need to exercise 'rational choice'.

What legitimates this agenda is the view that the UK is a 'Nation at Risk' in terms of its economic competitiveness in world markets and that it is falling educational standards, which are responsible. Hence the Educational Reform Act of 1989 which instituted a highly prescriptive National Curriculum cast in the form of those traditional depositories of standards, the academic school subjects.

The enemy of standards was held to be child-centred methods and the progressive educational theories from the disciplines of psychology and sociology that under-pinned them. In other words the enemy was those methods and ideas that sanctioned valuing the subjectivity of the child; their capacities as 'meaning makers' to make their own sense of their experience of the world in the light of their interests and concerns. Such values threatened traditional ways of organizing them with curricula organized around 'life themes', 'topics' and 'human issues'.

The traditional academic subjects traditionally legitimated an education for a liberal social elite' charged with the task "of guiding the nation towards its emancipation" (see Lyotard, 1979). The legitimating *emancipatory narrative* constructs subjects as structures of objective knowledge which provide a rational foundation for social progress, understood as the emancipation of society from social practices and institutions shaped by ignorance and blind prejudice and the establishment of a social order based on the liberal principles of justice and equity. In justifying subject knowledge in terms of its usefulness to the practical human subject engaged in "ethical, social, and political praxis" the emancipatory narrative implies a distinction between practical and theoretical reason. The products of the latter knowledge, can inform but not prescribe judgments about what constitutes progress, since the latter is the province of the autonomous and sovereign will. The legitimacy of traditional subject knowledge, and therefore its authority, depended on its usefulness as evidence to autonomous subjects charged with rationally reconstituting society (see again Lyotard, 1979). This view also underpinned the rationalist model of teacher education and provided the rationale for locating it in HEI's

However, the neo-liberal agenda is not really about reviving traditional standards. The English and Welsh National Curriculum has recast the traditional subject-based curriculum to emphasise the acquisition of economically functional knowledge and skills. Hence, we find a 'core curriculum' of Maths, English (Literacy), and Science (with the addition of a new subject called 'Technology') being differentiated from the Humanities and Arts subjects as a basis for national testing and the construction of performance tables. In this context the 'core subjects' command priority when it comes to curriculum time. Moreover, within each subject the National Curriculum Framework of targets and attainment levels tightly prescribes what constitutes relevant knowledge and progress in its acquisition. The National Curriculum Framework constitutes a mechanism that enables the state to link standards in education to the economic performativity of society.

Rather than driving up traditional standards it transforms them by subtly eroding the basis of their legitimation in the emancipatory ideal. What legitimates the acquisition of subject knowledge is no longer the belief that it provides a rational basis for emancipatory social action but its instrumentality for enhancing economic performativity.

We begin to see, from the way the National Curriculum shapes up in the new education market, the gradual erosion of the emancipatory narrative that shaped traditional conceptions of educational standards and located them in established categories of knowledge. Rather than driving up traditional educational standards the current reforms are driving in new ones. It is a case of new wine in bottles which have the appearance of the old ones.

By recasting subject knowledge in frameworks that differentiate 'core' from 'foundation' subjects and refer to targets and attainment levels, it is transformed into economically functional cultural capital. Standards then get subtly redefined as descriptions of economically valued learning outcomes as opposed to descriptions of rational minds. Interestingly such a redefinition cannot accommodate the postmodern and post positivistic view of knowledge as provisional, dynamic and open to speculative questioning. Governments interested in knowledge conceived as economically functional cultural capital are not going to be happy with the prospect of setting moving targets that prove almost impossible to measure. No, for such policy maker's knowledge must be affixed commodity. Hence, the postmodern view of knowledge that Stenhouse so ably anticipated in his vision of a new relationship between theory and practice runs counter to the idea of knowledge as learning outcomes that possess economic commodity value. He anticipated this too through his critique of the objectives model of curriculum design. Then 'why?' one might ask are economic competitors in the East increasingly turning to something like a Stenhouse *process model* of curriculum design. One possibility is that they have given up on the western idea that the economic commodity value of knowledge can be engineered by central government, in favor of the idea that governments should establish curriculum frameworks that enable teachers to help children develop the generic skills associated with 'learning how to learn'. Such skills will be at a premium in societies where what is required to secure human flourishing in all its dimensions becomes increasingly diverse and impossible for governments to predict.

The transference of funding for teacher education from the HEFCE to the TTA signaled the political intention to change the ideological basis of teacher education. By changing the funding base it became easier to ideologically decontaminate the teaching profession from 'trendy theory' as it was called and to reconstruct the profession as the deliverer of economically functional knowledge and skills. In this context the professional knowledge of the teacher largely consists of knowing how to perform certain tasks and functions effectively (competence) and knowing the facts that are required to generate effective performances (underpinning knowledge). Specifications of what teachers are required to do and know in competently delivery the prescribed curriculum is now generally called 'teaching standards'.

On this view of professional knowledge the contribution of Higher Education at best is to transmit the knowledge that underpins the competences, but this is a role that is very much subservient to the acquisition of technical knowhow. When the main point of spelling out teaching standards is for the purpose of performance assessment rather than curriculum design there may be little point in specifying the ‘underpinning knowledge’, since it will be implicit in the demonstrations of the competences.

‘Teaching as a standards-driven profession’ is the idea currently shaping teacher education in England and Wales under the auspices of the Teacher Training Agency. The competences are developed in the context of school experience and the underpinning knowledge in the context of the time spent in the HEI. Of course in England and Wales it is possible for many teachers to acquire much of the underpinning knowledge prior to teacher training for a Post Graduate Certificate in Education, through their undergraduate subject studies. This means that the time spent in the HEI is strictly minority time compared with the time in schools. This is why an alternative route to funding Teacher Training through HEI’s is that of funding training consortia of schools (SCITTS) and leaving it to them to sub-contract the provision of underpinning professional knowledge from a higher education institution.

The TTA has spelt out *Professional Standards for Teachers* at five levels:

1. Standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).
2. Standards for Expert Teachers.
3. Standards for Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCO’s).
4. Standards for the National Professional Qualification for Subject Leaders (NPQSL).
5. Standards for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH).

Level 1 standards were initially reported in a document produced jointly by the TTA and the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) entitled a Framework for the Assessment of Quality and Standards in Initial Teacher Training 1996-97. The standards specifications represented a reconstruction of what it means to professionally develop a teacher. The aim was no longer to develop the minds of teachers through the acquisition of professionally relevant knowledge exclusively mediated by academic experts, whether in relation to the subject matter they teach or in relation to the way it is mediated to the child (pedagogical content knowledge) or in relation to the aims and functions of education in the wider society. There is little room in these specifications for the idea of the teacher as an autonomous and sovereign agent of children’s education whose practices are informed by both a scholarly knowledge of their subject and the ‘disciplines of education’ (philosophy, psychology and the social sciences).

You will find little reference in these standards specifications to theoretical knowledge about the aims and purposes of education, about how children learn, or about the social functions of schooling. They largely refer to what teachers must do and know to be deemed competent in the performance of certain functions. Professional development is about learning to comply with standards of functional competence specified by the state.

For example, teachers who are competent at planning children's progression in learning must take account, where appropriate, of National Curriculum Programmes of Study. It is the latter which shapes students understanding of progression in learning rather than learning theory. This does not rule out teaching learning theory to student teachers so long as it reinforces the tacit theories embedded in the national programmes of study and thereby enables student teachers to plan progression in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum. A student teacher who used learning theory to critique the idea of progression underpinning the national programmes of study and generate a different standard of functional competence to inform his or her lesson planning would run the risk of not being judged competent and the teacher educator who encouraged such acritical use of learning theory can no longer publicly legitimate this practice by appealing to a model of professional development which is informed by the emancipatory ideal. Competency-based teacher education has become an instrument of ideological compliance to the logic of economic performativity.

It will come as no surprise that what counts as adequate subject knowledge for the purposes of teaching is no longer controlled by the academic institutions who deliver most of the initial teacher education programmes. The standards are derived from the programmes of study which support the National Curriculum Framework. For example, in relation to secondary schools, student's teachers' subject knowledge is judged by such criteria as:

“a detailed knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for KS3 and, where applicable KS4 –”

“where relevant, an understanding of progression from the KS2 Programmes of Study”.

In this way the teacher's subject expertise becomes redefined in terms of economically functional knowledge. The possession of subject knowledge that falls outside of this frame and that might be regarded as useful knowledge to inform emancipatory social praxis in the pursuit of a more just and equitable society is thereby marginalised as part of teacher's expert knowledge.

The TTA's competency standards define the ends of teacher education. In fact the TTA refers to 'training' rather than 'education' and this is indicative of the ideological reconstruction of teaching as a profession that is being engineered. Professional knowledge in this context is not a condition of teacher's development as autonomous professionals but simply instrumental to the production of performances which comply with standards specified by the state. The role of the teacher ceases to be generative one.

"The key indicator of the effectiveness of initial teacher training is how well students perform as teachers at the end of their course and as newly qualified teachers in their first and subsequent posts."

The assumption underpinning this statement is that the performances that constitute professional competence remain stable across variable school and social contexts. Good professional practice is not a matter of situational understanding involving discernment, discrimination and judgement in particular contexts but compliance to externally prescribed performance standards. On this basis it can be further assumed that performance in schools is an effect of training. This has been a consistent line in the political rhetoric surrounding the 'standards' debate in the UK. Evidence which suggests that the National Curriculum is not driving up standards in schools as much as expected is explained in terms of deficiencies in teacher training rather than the government's educational reform strategies. Reforming teacher training became a second phase in a general strategy for driving in standards to improve the economic performativity of the nation. In the context of initial training TTA funding of student places in HEI's is based on Inspection reports central to which are assessment of the teaching competence of students and of the quality of training and assessment of students. In this way the professional development needs of student teachers become increasingly defined by the state as opposed to academics. It is then a short step to asking whether academic institutions have anything distinctive to offer as a learning resources for the teaching profession. The TTA is currently funding school-centered initial teacher training (SCITT) which takes place entirely in school consortia. It has also developed a National Curriculum for Initial Teacher Training for Primary Schooling in the Basic Skills (numeracy, literacy and oracy).

At the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Levels referred to earlier standards specifications have been developed and are being used as a basis for performance management in schools. Currently fewer teachers attend post-graduate courses in education within HEI's to obtain Diploma's and Higher Degree's. Increasingly over the years post-graduate courses have become modularized to enable teacher's greater flexibility of choice in matching courses to their development needs.

HEI staff have made great efforts to design courses of practical relevance that relate theory to practice. Much of the assessable assignment work for many courses consists to this day of school-based research projects that enable teachers to test theory against practice and to critically reflect about their practice in the light of theory.

CPD post-graduate awards are perceived to be helpful in obtaining promotion to posts of responsibility in schools and to the posts of deputy head teacher or head teacher. However, they do not formally qualify teachers to occupy posts of responsibility. These qualification are increasingly being gained through learning tracks that are increasingly independently of HEI's.

In proposing CPD standards and qualification for certain positions of responsibility and for headship and linking training to them the TTA is currently threatening to undermine traditional HE-based CPD for teachers both ideologically and practically. The ideological threat is posed by a shift towards competency-based forms of assessment that diminishes the value academic institutions place on knowledge and understanding and the development of associated cognitive abilities. In other words, as with ITT, we are witnessing an attempt to erode the emancipatory ideal as a basis for CPD in the teaching profession and to replace it with a *logic of performativity* (see Lyotard, 1979 and Elliot, 1996) that locates teachers as functionaries in a 'production control system'. Since many HEI's rely on the TTA to fund substantial numbers of CPD the survival of their 'businesses in the field of basic education depends on their compliance to this ideological transformation, particularly in a situation where the TTA has made it clear that they will be competing against other providers, such as schools and private management and training agencies for funding.

I shall now try to illustrate the nature of the professional transformation the TTA is seeking to accomplish through its standards specifications and associated qualifications by citing its *Consultative Paper on Standards and a National Qualification for Subject Leaders* (Nov 1996). It is an indication of the way in which the continuous professional development of teachers is being ideologically reconstructed.

The standards proposed reflected and reinforced the subject based framework of the national curriculum by establishing a sub-system of roles which link curriculum leadership to subjects and define it largely in terms of the supervision and monitoring of the performance of classroom teachers. They sanctioned the formation of a hierarchical layer of surveillance and control over teaching and learning processes in schools and the destabilization of a professional culture that treats classroom practice as the 'private territory' of individual teachers, intrusion into which would be regarded as 'unprofessional'. Within this culture the achievement of qualified teacher status implied that a person could be trusted to teach unsupervised.

The proposed standards for curriculum leaders therefore implied the development of schools as low trust systems.

They constituted yet one more mechanism for driving up standards of student learning that linked the latter to the economic performativity of society. They also linked professional development to ‘career progression’ through an organisational hierarchy based on control as opposed to administrative functions. Let me now provide some examples from each of the five performance categories cited in the draft standards:

1. Teaching, Learning and the Curriculum

Establish and implement, clear pedagogic and curriculum policies and practices for the subjects, including schemes of work which meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and wider school policies and guidance on teaching methods.

How teachers taught in the province of their own classrooms has long been viewed as the professional prerogative of individual teachers. No longer it seems.

2. Monitoring, Evaluating, and Improving

Monitor and evaluate teaching of the subject in the school, taking action as necessary to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

This standard sanctions brining classroom practice under the direct observation of a supervisor who has the power to prescribe ‘improvements’.

3. People and Relationship

Manage and develop effective working relationships with the head teacher, senior management team and other subject leaders and staff at the school.

The order of priority appears to be from the top of the organizational hierarchy downwards. The staff (‘work-force’ come last). Does this ‘standard’ mean “above all get along with and don’t upset your superiors, and it will also help if you get along with your subordinates”.

4. Managing Resources

Establish resource needs for the subject, setting priorities for expenditure, and allocating those resources including time, to meet the objectives of whole school and subject plans.

In this category we have a shift in function from ‘supervisor’ to ‘resource manager’.

However, the aim is the same; namely, to maximize the performativity of the system as a whole by maximizing the performativity of the sub-system 'the curriculum leader' is responsible for. Performativity may be defined as the best equation achievable between in-put and out-put (see Lyotard, 1979). The National Curriculum Targets and Attainment Levels enable out-outs to be measured at each Key Stage and once can then discover the minimum level of resources required to achieve the production targets specified in whole school and subject plans.

5. Accountability

Reports, as required by school policies, to the head teacher, senior management team, governing body and parents on pupils'. Progress and achievement, and strategic plans for the subject.

Accountability is upwards not downwards, and it is for increased levels of 'productivity' within a subject area.

These examples illustrate how CPD has been perceived by the TTA, as progression up an organizational hierarchy within schools that are being conceived as *production systems* from an industrial model of education. But whatever the level covered by the performance standards the teacher is being constructed as a functional operative within a control system. Indeed the examples cited suggest that the primary intention is to transform schools as organizations through its CPD policies. The other clear intention underpinning these policies is to weaken what it perceives to be the power of HEI's to ideologically control teacher's construction of their professional identities.

The latest battle with HEI's that the UK government is starting to fight is to weaken their control over what is to count as relevant and valid knowledge about education. It is now talking about *teaching as an evidence-based profession* in two ways. It has endorsed action research as a way forward, but one suspects that it views what counts as evidence from action research very instrumentally, as a basis for making teaching more technically competent rather than a basis for a more radical reconstruction and reconceptualisation of teaching as an *educational practice*. Secondly, the UK government talks about *evidence based practice* in terms of teachers using educational research findings produced in HEI's to inform their teaching. Again what constitutes relevant evidence appears to be that which teachers can use to improve their instrumental effectiveness in 'raising standards'. These ideas of *teaching as an evidence based profession* give a role to HEI's in constructing the technical-rational knowledge that underpins the competences or standards required of the teaching profession. But this need to imply that the researchers who generate this knowledge are involved in the transmission of this knowledge through their active engagement in teacher education programmes based in HEI's.

The ideas in themselves do not constitute a persuasive argument for retaining HE as the setting for teacher education/ they also convey a threat to academic educational researcher given the tendency for government to be interested in securing control over the funding of educational research, responsibility for which remains with the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The idea of evidence-based practice could be used to legitimate funding only educational research by academics which was ideologically compatible with government policy. In which case mechanisms of compliance would be established as strategies for eroding the critical role educational researchers in the academy have cast themselves in. one more final nail in the coffin of the emancipatory narrative that has legitimated the role of Higher Education in the professional development of teachers?

THE TEACHER AS A REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER

Donald Schon's attempt to provide an alternative account of professional knowledge to the technical-rational model through the idea of *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983) held considerable sway in Initial Teacher Education circles in Britain from the mid-80's for about a decade. Schon attempted to demonstrate a new epistemology of practice through case studies of how professional think in action. He argued that professional knowledge is implicit in action but the professionals maybe unable to describe their knowledge. However, at times they can come to recognize such knowledge through *reflecting in action* in situations about which they feel uncertain and ambiguous. In the course of such reflection they recover their knowing in action and modify it to make sense of the new situation, a process Schon calls *reframing*. Reflective Practice may also allow for *reflecting on action* where the practitioner creates time to reflect on his or her 'knowing in action'. Schon's account of professional knowledge as implicit in practice and developed through reflection in and on practice is arguably fully incorporated within the idea of the teacher as a researcher. However, for Stenhouse the latter tended to presume a certain curriculum context as a condition for reflecting in and on action and a role for higher education institutions in creating it. Teachers are not assumed to be capable of reflective practice irrespective of the conditions prevailing in the context of practice.

Schon's idea appears to be less context bound than Stenhouse's which perhaps explains why it has failed as an operationally persuasive vision of teacher education. There has been a failure to understand the conditions that would enable HE-based programmes of initial teacher training to develop teachers as reflective practitioners. One of the things that is not clear is the extent to which the aim of developing the teacher as a Reflective Practitioner requires any distinctive contribution from HEI's.

The dimension of reflecting on action may point in this direction e.g. by employing theoretical constructs to interpret interpretations developed through reflection in action. However, this is not clear and because it is not the idea of the 'teacher as a reflective practitioner' has not been able to provide a convincing case, following the collapse of the rationalist model, for a distinctive contribution from HE to teacher education.

We are left on the global stage with 'the teacher as researcher' contending against 'standard driven professional development' as the champion of a continuing role for HE. Each is shaped by different policy contexts. One supports the creation of innovative experiments in education with teachers as a response to social change. The other supports a process of top-down social engineering to render the outcomes of education more uniform and predictable.

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